



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Virginia Department of Housing
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Virginia State Fire Marshal offers safety tips for July 4

Richmond, VA – As the nation prepares to celebrate Independence Day on July 4, the Virginia State Fire Marshal's Office reminds Virginians to celebrate with safety and caution – especially around fireworks.

Virginia's laws prohibit the use of consumer fireworks for private use with the following exceptions: sparklers, fountains, pharaohs, serpents, and caps. However, each Virginia locality has the right to completely prohibit the use of these products in their areas, so consumers are advised to check with their local fire marshal or fire official to learn more about the regulations in their area.

"It is important to note that consumer fireworks can also be dangerous, especially to children," said State Fire Marshal Charles E. Altizer. "What may seem like an innocent firework, such as sparklers, can reach temperatures above 1,000 degrees Fahrenheit and can cause serious burns, fire, or worse."

In 2005, more than 10,000 people were treated at emergency rooms for fireworks related injuries throughout the country. More than half were burns, and 24 percent involved injuries to the eyes. The highest incident of fireworks injury was for school-age children, at nearly half of those injured under the age of 15 according to the National Fire Protection Association. .

"Regardless of whether they are legal or not, fireworks can be extremely dangerous," said Altizer. "We encourage citizens to leave the fireworks to the professionals, and attend a public fireworks display in their area during their July fourth celebrations."

For more information or questions regarding fireworks safety, call (804) 371-7170, or contact your local fire marshal.

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